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79-1696

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
Security Committee

SECOM-D-518

14 MAY 1979

DD/A Registry
File Communications

Executive Registry

10-9316

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Acting Deputy Director for Administration

FROM: Robert W. Gambino
Chairman

SUBJECT: Interagency Telephone Laboratory

1. Action Requested: That you sign the attached letter to Mr. William H. Webster, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

2. Background: In May 1976, the Security Committee sought and the FBI accepted as a service of common concern the task of providing the Intelligence Community an Interagency Telephone Laboratory (ITL). Opened in October 1977, the function of the ITL is to examine actual or possibly compromised telephones, stay abreast of telephone technology, and alert the Community to hazards and procedures of attack by hostile services. The responsibility of the ITL was recently expanded to include research and development matters necessary to formulation of policy guidance on telephone security. The Technical Services Division under the direction of Mr. Jay Cochran of the FBI has allocated 2 full-time engineering positions in support of the ITL which are supervised by Dr. Jerry Breidenfeld, FBI, Chairman, Telephone Security Panel.

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Since the FBI accepted the responsibility as executive agent for the ITL a number of telephone systems containing compromised or possibly compromised equipment have been analyzed and reported to the Intelligence Community. These reports have been comprehensive and well written. Attached as an example is a report of analysis of the telephone of a US foreign service officer serving in [redacted]

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Recent findings by the ITL indicate that all telephone security devices previously recommended by the Telephone Security Panel will have to be re-evaluated in light of current technology. Recent tests have revealed deficiencies in some telephone security devices currently in use by the Intelligence Community. For example, none of the Western Electric 270 Series Line Switches (automatic line disconnect) provide any significant protection against flooding. In addition, some of the approved ringers have been found to be microphonic and useable audio could be obtained from them. The Intelligence Community has been made aware of these findings. [redacted]

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The attached letter is to recognize significant contributions that the ITL is making to the Intelligence Community, to express appreciation to Mr. Webster and members of his staff who support the ITL and to hopefully obtain increased support for the broadened responsibilities of that laboratory. Specifically, the letter should be helpful to Dr. Breidenfeld in obtaining a senior level technician to assist the two engineers currently working exclusively for the ITL. [redacted]

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3. Recommendation: It is recommended that the attached letter be forwarded to Director Webster of the FBI. [redacted]

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Robert W. Gambino

Attachments

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